

Introduction

The President's Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) is charged with reporting annually to the President on progress under Executive Order (EO) 13352, "Facilitation of Cooperative Conservation." As one of the EO organizations, EPA gathered information from across the Agency and developed its response when CEQ Chairman James Connaughton requested contributions to the 2007 report.

Because EPA's mission focuses on protecting human health and the environment through pollution prevention and control rather than land or natural resource management, the Agency's approach to Cooperative Conservation is somewhat different from that of our EO partners, the Departments of Agriculture, Interior, and Defense and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration in the Department of Commerce.

Early in the 1970s, William Ruckelshaus, the first EPA Administrator, recognized that EPA could not achieve that mission alone; the Agency needed help to meet its goals. Over its thirty-seven year history, EPA has increasingly sought ways to leverage our programs through innovative partnerships, a wide array of public engagement and collaborative problem solving processes, and by encouraging all segments of society to become environmental stewards. For EPA, the term cooperative conservation means collaboration and partnership, stewardship and sustainability.

Offices and Regions across EPA responded to the request for input to the 2007 Cooperative Conservation Annual Report using the Agency's broader perspective. Therefore, many of the submittals are excellent examples of partnerships, collaborations, and tools or mechanisms that enable, ease or encourage collaboration. Often the projects documented do not involve any of the Cooperative Conservation Executive Order Federal departments and agencies.

Because CEQ intends to integrate all five Department/Agency contributions thematically and select only the best examples of interagency cooperation among the EO organizations for its 2007 report, EPA's submittal highlighted projects involving Cooperative Conservation organizations along with stakeholders, and catalogued projects under broad themes. To ensure that the information submitted is available to everyone at EPA and the public, everything collected is included in the Table of Contents for this web posting to the EPA Cooperative Conservation web pages and the Collaboration web pages, [<http://www.epa.gov/whccc/index.htm>] and [<http://www.epa.gov/NCEI/collaboration>].